

SENATE—Tuesday, January 23, 2001

The Senate met at 11:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear Father, who has graciously made each of us a never-to-be-repeated miracle of uniqueness, we praise You that we can be ourselves because You love us, we can use our gifts because You gave them to us, and we can grasp the opportunities You provide because You want to surprise us with Your goodness. All that we possess and have become is because of Your providence. The wonder of it all is that it is Your nature to go beyond what You have done or given before. This gives the zest of expectation and excitement to our lives. It also helps us to know that we can come to You with our worries and anxieties, our fears and frustrations, our hopes and hurts.

You know us as we really are and see beneath the shining armor of pretended sufficiency. You know when we are at the end of our tethers and need Your strength; You understand our discouragements and disappointments and renew our hope; You feel our physical and emotional pain and heal us. You have told us that to whom much is given, much will be required. Thank You that You have taught us that of whom much is required, much shall be given. Help us not to be stingy receivers today. You are our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MIKE ENZI, a Senator from the State of Wyoming, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and with the time being equally divided in the usual form.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Oklahoma.

SCHEDULE

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, today, we will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m. At 12:30, the Senate will recess for the weekly party conferences until 2:15 p.m. It is my hope that prior to the recess, we will reach a consent agreement for the consideration of four of the President's Cabinet nominations. That agreement would allow for a vote or votes shortly after we reconvene at 2:15 today.

Senators can therefore expect roll-call votes later in the day. Additional nominations are scheduled for hearings during Wednesday's session. It is hoped that we can expedite those nominations for full Senate action.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 73, S. 74, S. 75, S. 76, S. 78, AND S. 79

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I understand there are six bills at the desk due for their second reading. I ask that they be read consecutively.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 73) to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to any State or local educational agency that denies or prevents participation in constitutional prayer in schools.

A bill (S. 74) to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to any State or local educational agency that distributes or provides morning-after pills to schoolchildren.

A bill (S. 75) to protect the lives of unborn human beings.

A bill (S. 76) to make it a violation of a right secured by the Constitution and laws of the United States to perform an abortion with the knowledge that the abortion is being performed solely because of the gender of the fetus.

A bill (S. 78) to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to make preferential treatment an unlawful employment practice, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 79) to encourage Drug-Free Schools and Safe Schools.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I object en bloc to further proceedings on these bills at this particular time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the rules, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Vermont.

EDUCATION

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, this morning, I, Senator KENNEDY, Congressman BOEHNER, the Chairman of the House Education and Workforce Committee, and Congressman MILLER, the ranking Democrat of that committee, met with President Bush to discuss his very ambitious education initiative.

The package the President is putting forward today contains several areas where there is general, bipartisan agreement for providing the tools necessary for every child to receive a quality education.

These areas include: strengthening accountability to improve student performance; providing the funds necessary to prepare, recruit, and train high quality teachers; developing reading initiatives to ensure that all students will be able to read by the third grade; strengthening early childhood programs; creating a math/science partnership for states, colleges, and universities to strengthen K through twelve math and science education; providing activities related to technology as a means to boost student achievement; and giving school districts the flexibility to be innovative in implementing reform.

All Americans agree that every child in this country deserves a high quality education. We at the federal level must remember that we do not necessarily have all the answers for making high quality education accessible to all students. It is parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, school personnel, state and local school board officials, and students that have many of the answers.

The proposal outlined by President Bush is a very good framework which will go a long way in providing the assistance that is needed at the state and local level to have a first-rate elementary and secondary educational system.

It is critical that all of us in the Senate and in the House join with the President in making comprehensive education reform our top priority. It is essential to our economic survival.

Almost half of all adults have neither completed high school nor have pursued any type of postsecondary education. Approximately twenty percent of all eighteen year olds do not graduate from high school.

The most recent Third International Mathematics and Science Study indicates that fourth graders performed well in both math and science in comparison to students in other nations. U.S. eighth graders performed near the